



Ban on renter evictions during COVID-19 pandemic is extended

By ASHRAF KHALIL and
MICHAEL CASEY

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Biden administration is extending a federal moratorium on evictions of tenants who have fallen behind on rent during the coronavirus pandemic.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on Monday moved to continue the pandemic-related protection, which had been scheduled to expire on Wednesday. The moratorium is now extended through the end of June.

The ban, initially put in place last year, provides protection for renters out of concern that having families lose their homes and move into shelters or share crowded conditions with relatives or friends

during the pandemic would further spread the highly contagious virus, which has killed more than 545,000 people in the United States.

To be eligible for the housing protection, renters must earn \$198,000 annually or less for couples filing jointly, or \$99,000 for single filers; demonstrate that they've sought government help to pay the rent; declare that they can't pay because of COVID-19 hardships; and affirm they are likely to become homeless if evicted.

In February, President Joe Biden extended a ban on housing foreclosures to June 30 to help homeowners struggling during the pandemic.

Continued on next page



In this Jan. 13, 2021, file photo, tenants' rights advocates demonstrate in front of the Edward W. Brooke Courthouse in Boston.

Associated Press

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President Joe Biden speaks with members of the press before Air Force One at Delaware Air National Guard Base in New Castle, Del., Sunday, March 28, 2021.

Associated Press

Continued from Front

Housing advocates had generally expected the extension of the tenant eviction moratorium and had been lobbying the Biden administration, saying it was too early in the country's economic recovery to let the ban lapse.

John Pollock, coordinator of the National Coalition for a Civil Right to Counsel, said that the moratorium "is vital for ensuring there is enough time for Congress's emergency rental assistance to

reach the millions of renters in need who would otherwise be evicted."

Pollack said current surveys show that 18.4% of all tenants owe back rent. That number also revealed significant racial disparity: The percentage of Black tenants behind on their rent was 32.9%.

But Pollock and other housing advocates were disappointed that Biden merely extended the ban without addressing several issues that put many tenants at

risk of eviction.

"In Massachusetts, judges have green-lighted over 1,700 evictions under the federal eviction moratorium. While it is protecting some families, it's clearly not protecting all," said Denise Matthews-Turner, the interim executive director of City Life/Vida Urbana, a grassroots housing justice organization in Boston. "The extension is a good thing, but it's disappointing that the moratorium wasn't also strengthened to keep families from falling through the cracks, such as families with no-fault evictions or whose landlords won't accept rent relief."

Diane Yentel, president of the National Low Income Housing Coalition, said she and others had pushed to make the ban's protections automatic and universal. Currently, tenants have to actively take steps to invoke the ban's protections, which can lead to exploitation of those who don't know their rights or don't understand the process. Also, some jurisdictions have allowed landlords to

initiate the eviction process in court, a tactic that scared many families into leaving rather than having the eviction proceedings, even unfinished ones, on their records.

"While the Biden administration is well aware of the shortcomings in the moratorium order that allow some evictions to proceed during the pandemic, the CDC director did not correct them," Yentel said.

Instead, the CDC "simply extended President Trump's original order, leaving the loopholes and flaws in place, a disappointing decision that will result in more harmful evictions during the pandemic," she said. Pollock said the moratorium should also include a provision ensuring tenants have a right to counsel, "so that they can effectively use rental assistance and fight the increasing wave of illegal evictions."

Landlords in several states have sued to scrap the order, arguing it was causing them financial hardship and infringing on their property rights. They remain

opposed to any extension, saying it does nothing to address the financial challenges facing renters and landlords. There are at least six prominent lawsuits challenging the authority of the CDC ban. So far, three judges have sided with the ban and three have ruled against, with all cases currently going through appeals. One judge in Memphis declared the CDC order unenforceable in the entire Western District of Tennessee.

"Though politically popular and well-intentioned, eviction moratoria push renters and their housing providers closer to the brink of financial ruin and jeopardize the stability of 40 million rental homes," Bob Pinnegar, President & CEO of the National Apartment Association, said in a statement. "These policies need to end, and we instead need to focus on swift distribution of federal rental assistance to keep renters securely housed and ensure housing providers can pay the bills that keep housing safe and operational." □

Biden boosts offshore wind energy, wants to power 10M homes

By MATTHEW DALY

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Biden administration is moving to sharply increase offshore wind energy along the East Coast, saying Monday it is taking initial steps toward approving a huge wind farm off the New Jersey coast as part of an effort to generate electricity for more than 10 million homes nationwide by 2030. Meeting the target could mean jobs for more than 44,000 workers and for 33,000 others in related employment, the White House said. The effort also would help avoid 78 million metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions per year, a key step in the administration's

fight to slow global warming.

President Joe Biden "believes we have an enormous opportunity in front of us to not only address the threats of climate change, but use it as a chance to create millions of good-paying, union jobs that will fuel America's economic recovery," said White House climate adviser Gina McCarthy. "Nowhere is the scale of that opportunity clearer than for offshore wind."

The administration's commitment to the still untapped industry "will create pathways to the middle class for people from all backgrounds and commu-

nities," she added.

The administration said it intends to prepare a formal environmental analysis for the Ocean Wind project off New Jersey. That would move Ocean Wind toward becoming the third commercial-scale offshore wind project in the U.S.

The Interior Department's Bureau of Ocean Energy Management said it is targeting offshore wind projects in shallow waters between Long Island and the New Jersey coast. A recent study shows the area can support up to 25,000 development and construction jobs by 2030, Interior said. The ocean energy bureau said it will push to sell com-

mercial leases in the area in late 2021 or early 2022. Ocean Wind, 15 miles off the coast of southern New Jersey, is projected to produce about 1,100 megawatts a year, enough to power 500,000 homes.

The Interior Department has previously announced environmental reviews for Vineyard Wind in Massachusetts and South Fork wind farm about 35 miles east of Montauk Point in Long Island, N.Y. Vineyard Wind is expected to produce about 800 megawatts of power and South Fork about 132 megawatts. Biden has vowed to double offshore wind production by 2030 as part of his effort

to slow climate change. The likely approval of the Atlantic Coast projects — the leading edge of at least 16 offshore wind projects along the East Coast — marks a sharp turnaround from the Trump administration, which stymied wind power both onshore and in the ocean.

"As our country faces the interlocking challenges of a global pandemic, economic downturn, racial injustice and the climate crisis, we have to transition to a brighter future for everyone," Haaland said.

Vineyard Wind is slated to become operational in 2023, with Ocean Wind following a year later. □

Woman says Gov. Cuomo forcibly kissed her cheeks in 2017

ALBANY, N.Y. (AP) — An upstate New York woman said Monday that New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo grabbed her face and kissed her cheek at her home during a visit to inspect local flood damage, becoming the latest woman to accuse the embattled governor of inappropriate behavior.

Sherry Vill made the allegations during a Zoom news conference with attorney Gloria Allred, describing a spring 2017 visit to her Rochester-area home after flooding near Lake Ontario. Allred said Vill has long wanted to report the Democratic governor's conduct, but her family was worried he would "use his power to retaliate against her and her family."

Cuomo kissed both of her cheeks in front of family members while inspecting her flood-damaged home in what Vill, who has been married for decades, felt was a "highly sexual manner."

Then, Vill said, the governor "stopped and turned to me and said, 'You are beautiful.'"

"I felt like he was coming onto me in my own home." He then inspected the damage with his staff and kissed her cheek again outside her home in a "very aggressive manner," Vill said.

"While still holding one of my hands, he forcibly grabbed my face with his



New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo speaks at an event at the new Settlement Community Center in the Bronx borough of New York, Friday, March 26, 2021.

Associated Press

other big hand and kissed my cheek," Vill said.

"I felt like I was being man-handled," said Vill, now 55. Vill, who is about 5 feet (1.5 meters) tall, said the governor towered over her.

"The way he looked at me and his body language made me very uncomfortable," she said. "I felt he was acting in a highly flirtatious and inappropriate manner, especially in front of my family and neighbors."

Vill shared a copy of a July 19, 2017, letter she received from the governor in which he said he'll help homeowners affected by the flooding.

"It was a pleasure to meet you recently," he wrote.

The letter was only addressed to Vill, who questioned why it wasn't addressed to her husband or son, whom the governor also met.

She said she received a phone call "within days" from a female employee on the governor's staff who said the governor was having an event in town and asked if Vill would like to attend.

"Notably she didn't say my husband and I, or my family and I, only specifically me," she said. "I purposely did not respond to the invitation. I felt very uneasy

about the call. I was the only one who received the call and the personal invite from the governor."

There was no immediate comment from the Cuomo administration.

A series of women, some who worked for Cuomo, have accused him of making inappropriate comments about their looks, giving them unwanted hugs or kisses, or making comments they interpreted as gauging their interest in an affair. Among his accusers are two aides who still work in the governor's office. One, who has yet to speak publicly, reportedly said the governor groped

her at the Executive Mansion last summer.

The accusation Monday has similarities to allegations made by Anna Ruch, who told The New York Times that Cuomo touched her face and back and asked to kiss her moments after they met at a wedding reception.

Cuomo has denied touching anyone inappropriately but said he's sorry if he made anyone uncomfortable. The Democratic governor has brushed off widespread calls for his resignation and asked that people wait for the results of an investigation overseen by state Attorney General Letitia James.

Allred said Vill would cooperate with James' investigation, and that Vill will wait to see the results of the investigation before weighing in on what should happen next.

The state Assembly is conducting a separate investigation into whether there are grounds to impeach the governor. Allred said Vill has no plans to alert the law firm leading the Assembly judiciary committee's investigation and is focusing on the attorney general's office for now.

"We'll have to see what if anything she's willing to do after that," Allred said. "This is not easy for Sherry. As I said, she's been very brave. She's never been involved in a situation like this before." □

U.S. eyes additional UN action on N. Korea after missile tests



People watch a TV showing an image of North Korea's new guided missile during a news program at the Suseo Railway Station in Seoul, South Korea, Friday.

Associated Press

By MATTHEW LEE

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Biden administration said Monday it's looking at "additional actions" that the United Nations might take to respond to North Korea's recent missile tests.

U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Linda Thomas-Greenfield wasn't specific about what those actions might entail, but noted that the UN Security Council had met last week and renewed the mandate of experts who monitor sanctions against the North. The council is also

expected to hold closed-door discussions on North Korea on Tuesday.

"We're looking at additional actions that we might take," Thomas-Greenfield said of the U.S. and others Security Council members. Meanwhile, President Joe Biden's national security adviser Jake Sullivan will be meeting in Washington soon with his counterparts from Japan and South Korea to discuss North Korea strategy as the administration finalizes a review of how to approach the country. Secretary of State

Antony Blinken, who recently returned from Tokyo and Seoul, said the three countries are united in dealing with the challenges posed by Pyongyang.

"What we're seeing from Pyongyang in terms of these provocations does nothing to shake the resolve of our three countries along with allies and partners around the world to approach North Korea from a position of strength in order to diminish the threat that it poses to the region and beyond," Blinken said. □

Police: 'No idea' why man shot 5 people before killing self

By MICHAEL KUNZELMAN

Associated Press

Investigators have "no idea" why a Maryland man fatally shot his parents at their home and gunned down two other people at a convenience store before setting fire to his apartment and killing himself, a police official said Monday.

A gun that Joshua Green, 27, used in Sunday's deadly shooting spree was registered to him and had been legally purchased in 2020, according to Baltimore County Police Col. Andre Davis.

"As to why this occurred, we have no idea yet," Davis said at a news conference. "Our homicide detectives are tirelessly investigating a motive, but it appears that the shooter acted alone."

Police believe Green killed his parents — Douglas Green, 59, and Olivia Green, 63 — at their Baltimore County home before he drove over to a Royal Farms store in Essex just before 7 a.m. on Sunday.

Green blocked in another car in the store's parking lot, got out and shot and killed Alpha Elizabeth, 63, while she sat in her vehicle, according to Davis. Green then entered the store and fatally shot a customer,



Baltimore County Police Col. Andre Davis, left, and Police Chief Melissa Hyatt are shown at a news conference in Baltimore County on Monday, March 29, 2021.

Associated Press

44-year-old Sylvester Day Jr., near a cash register before wounding a store employee. Davis said the employee, a man, was in stable condition at a hospital on Monday.

After the shooting, police said, Green returned to his nearby home and set fire to his apartment before

shooting himself. Police found the apartment engulfed in flames and Green dead in the parking lot with a self-inflicted gunshot wound.

Homicide detectives found the bodies of Green's parents in their garage when they went to their home to notify them of their son's

death, according to Davis. Davis said Green had "no criminal contacts with police" before the shootings. Police Chief Melissa Hyatt said that there were "more questions than answers" about a "horrible and sickening event which changed the lives of many people." "For now, we know that four

innocent people lost their lives and one person sustained serious injuries," she said.

Hyatt said police have spoken to a relative of Green but she didn't elaborate.

"When we are able to definitively have facts and information, we will relay that. We just want to make sure that we are putting out accurate information," the chief said.

Green's parents lived in an unincorporated part of Baltimore County called Baldwin. Daniel Brenneman, 73, a neighbor who lives two doors down from the couple's home, said he noticed a police cruiser and saw a photographer out in front of the house while walking his dog on Sunday evening. "A storm blew through here, and I thought it was a car accident around the corner," he said. "I haven't heard a thing."

Brenneman said he has exchanged greetings and small talk with the couple but didn't know them personally. "I wave at him from time to time. He's always working in his yard," he said. Royal Farms spokesperson Breahna Brown said Sunday that the company had no immediate comment on the shooting at its store. □

Capitol riot suspect wore 'I Was There' shirt when arrested



A statement of facts document presented to the United States District Court in the case against Garret Miller is photographed on Monday, March 29, 2021.

Associated Press

By MICHAEL KUNZELMAN

Associated Press

Garret Miller didn't speak to the law enforcement officers who arrested him on charges he stormed the

U.S. Capitol in January, but the T-shirt he was wearing at his Dallas home that day sent a clear and possibly incriminating message. Miller's shirt had a photo-

graph of former President Donald Trump, and it said "Take America Back" and "I Was There, Washington D.C., January 6, 2021," federal prosecutors noted in a court filing Monday.

Prosecutors are urging a judge to keep Miller jailed while he awaits trial on charges stemming from the Jan. 6 riots in the nation's capital.

On a recorded call immediately after his arrest, Miller told his mother, "I don't feel that I've done anything wrong and now I'm being locked up," according to prosecutors.

Like many of the more than 300 people facing federal charges in connection with the siege, Miller thoroughly documented and commented on his actions that

day in a flurry of social media posts. After Miller posted a selfie showing himself inside the Capitol building, another Facebook user wrote, "bro you got in? Nice!" Miller replied, "just wanted to incriminate myself a little lol," prosecutors said. Miller joined the mob that breached the Capitol building and later threatened to kill New York Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and a Capitol police officer, authorities said.

After the Democratic congresswoman tweeted the word "Impeach," Miller tweeted back to her, "Assassinate AOC," according to prosecutors. In a Jan. 10 post on Instagram, Miller said the officer who shot and killed a woman in the crowd of rioters should get

a televised execution, according to prosecutors.

"By bringing tactical gear, ropes, and potentially, by his own admission, a gun to the Capitol on January 6, 2021, Miller showed that he was not just caught up in the frenzy of the crowd but instead came to D.C. with the intention of disrupting the democratic process of counting and certifying Electoral College votes," prosecutors wrote.

A federal magistrate judge in Texas ordered Miller detained after his Jan. 20 arrest. On Feb. 12, a grand jury in the District of Columbia indicted Miller on 12 counts, including civil disorder, obstruction of an official proceeding, and assaulting, resisting or impeding officers. □

EU commissioner stresses need for solidarity on migration

By ELENA BECATOROS

Associated Press

ATHENS, Greece (AP) — The European Union's home affairs commissioner on Monday stressed the need for solidarity among the bloc's member states in tackling migration, and called on Turkey to resume accepting the return of people whose asylum applications are rejected in Greece after arriving from Turkish territory.

Ylva Johansson and Greek Migration Minister Notis Mitarachi spoke on the eastern Aegean island of Lesbos after visiting migrant facilities there and on the island of Samos.

Johansson's visit comes amid continuing accusations against Greece of illegal summary deportations, and as EU countries discuss a new migration pact to deal with the issue of people seeking asylum in Europe. The vast majority of asylum-seekers arrive by sea in the countries on the EU's southern and southeastern borders: Greece, Italy and Spain. Those three, along with the also affected island nations of Malta and Cyprus, have joined forces to lobby for a more equal distribution among



EU Commissioner Ylva Johansson speaks during a news conference at Mytilene port, on the eastern Aegean island of Lesbos, Greece, Monday, March 29, 2021.

Associated Press

the bloc's other members. "What we have been seeing in Europe the last six years is the lack of a Europeanized migration policy, and that means that member states at our external borders have been under huge pressure," Johansson said during a joint press conference with Mitarachi. "And especially some islands have been under huge pressure in the ab-

sence of a European solution."

Johansson said she understood "that everybody has a limit to their patience, and I understand that this limit is close" in some areas, such as Lesbos.

In Greece, the main brunt of migration has been borne by the eastern Aegean islands, which are close to Turkey and thus a favored route for people-smuggling

gangs. Local residents on both islands held protests during Johansson's visit. A 2016 EU-Turkey deal stipulates that new arrivals must remain on the islands pending return to Turkey unless their asylum application is successful. The agreement reduced arrivals but did not stop them entirely, leading to massively overcrowded island camps.

Johansson noted the situa-

tion had greatly improved recently, with a faster asylum procedure and relocations to other European countries.

In 2019, she noted, there were 42,000 people in island camps in "totally unacceptable conditions for the migrants and the local population." That number is now down to 14,000, which the commissioner said was still too high.

"We are addressing the shortcomings in the European migration system. One of the most important things is to avoid irregular departure," Johansson said, referring to asylum-seekers leaving Turkish shores.

Mitarachi once again rejected accusations by refugee rights organizations and numerous migrants that Greece conducts pushbacks at sea the illegal deportation of migrants who haven't first been allowed to apply for asylum. "We strongly deny that the Greek coast guard has been ever involved in pushbacks."

Mitarachi said reports were investigated and that so far no specific case had come to light that proved a pushback. □

Australia's leader makes Cabinet moves after sex scandals

CANBERRA, Australia (AP)

— Australia's leader on Monday reassigned some key members of his Cabinet and launched a new taskforce as he tries to address a series of sexual

misconduct scandals that have rocked his government.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison removed embattled ministers Christian Porter and Linda Reynolds from

their high-profile roles. Porter, who was the attorney-general, had earlier taken mental health leave after revealing he was the person accused of raping a 16-year-old girl when he was a teenager 33 years ago. His accuser has since died and police are not pursuing any charges.

Reynolds, who was the defense minister, had been heavily criticized for failing to adequately support a young staffer who alleged she was raped by a more senior colleague in the minister's office two years ago.

Reynolds was forced to apologize after it emerged she had called the staffer a "lying cow."

Under the Cabinet reshuffle announced by

Morrison, Michaelia Cash will become the new attorney-general and Peter Dutton will take over as defense minister.

Porter will be reassigned to industry minister, while Reynolds will become the government services minister.

Morrison also announced he was starting a new Cabinet taskforce to address issues of women's equality, safety, economic security, health and well-being. Morrison will co-chair the taskforce along with Marise Payne, the minister for women.

Morrison said the changes would mean the Cabinet would have the strongest ever representation of women.

"But it's not just about the

size of the female contingent in my cabinet; it's the skills and the experience, it's the perspective, and it's the collaboration they bring to our nation's most difficult tasks," Morrison said.

The rape allegations have not been the only sexual misconduct scandals to hit Parliament as the perception grows that it fosters a culture that is toxic for women.

Last week Ten Network television news reported that several male government staffers had set up a Facebook Messenger group that enabled them to share images and video of sex acts performed in Parliament House, including on the desks of female lawmakers. □



In this Feb. 10, 2020, file photo, Australia's Prime Minister Scott Morrison makes a joint statement with Indonesia's President Joko Widodo at Parliament House in Canberra, Australia.

Associated Press

Israel's political stalemate to land at Rivlin's doorstep

By LAURIE KELLMAN

Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel (AP) — President Reuven Rivlin announced Monday that he will begin consultations next week with Israel's political rivals in hopes of unraveling the country's post-election deadlock.

Israel's presidency is largely a figurehead office. But after national elections, the president is responsible for choosing the leader of the party with the best chance of forming a government to put together a majority coalition in the 120-seat parliament.

That is usually a straightforward decision, with the leader of the largest individual party typically selected as the prime minister-designate. But after last Tuesday's election delivered no clear path to forming a governing majority, Rivlin will face a difficult task.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's Likud is the largest single party, with 30 seats. But with his traditional nationalist and ultra-Orthodox allies, he has secured only 52 seats in parliament. Netanyahu's opponents secured 57 seats, also short of a majority, while two par-



In this March 16, 2021 file photo, Israeli President Reuven Rivlin addresses the media during a meeting with German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier at Bellevue Palace in Berlin, Germany.

Associated Press

ties have not committed to either side.

Rivlin's office said he would hold two days of consultations with each party, starting next Monday. Two days later, he hopes to announce his choice for forming a new coalition. His designated prime minister would then have up to six weeks to work out a coalition deal with other parties. It's not an easy task given Israel's kaleidoscope of

changing alliances and rivalries. The factions who oppose Netanyahu have less in common than the right-leaning factions that could join up with him.

And support for Israel's longest-serving prime minister, who is under indictment on corruption charges, has dipped.

Rivlin's consultations will coincide with the resumption of Netanyahu's trial. Next Monday, witnesses are

to begin taking the stand against Netanyahu in the trial's evidentiary phase, a development that could become both embarrassing and time-consuming for the embattled prime minister. Netanyahu has denied all charges against him. The answer to whether Israel can form a government might not be known for weeks, leaving open the possibility of going to a fifth election in a little over two

years.

Party leaders have already begun behind-the-scenes negotiations, though the talks appear to be in their early stages.

Netanyahu got an endorsement Monday from the ultra-Orthodox Shas party, for example. But the party has remained solidly behind him and its endorsement had been widely expected.

Opposition leader Yair Lapid, leader of the centrist Yesh Atid party, has held meetings with other party heads.

But the real drama will depend on formal decisions by potential kingmakers.

They include Mansour Abbas, leader of a small Arab Islamist party that has endorsed neither side, and onetime Netanyahu allies-turned-opponents Naftali Bennett of Yamina, Gideon Saar of New Hope and Benny Gantz, the Blue and White party chief.

If they agree on anything, it may be that Israel should not go through a fifth election. The protracted stalemate has left the country of 9.3 million people with a poorly functioning government for long periods of time. □

Japan, Indonesia seek to improve Myanmar situation

By MARI YAMAGUCHI

TOKYO (AP) — Japanese Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi denounced Myanmar's escalating crackdown on pro-democracy protests in talks Monday with his Indonesian counterpart, who is visiting Tokyo for security discussions focusing on China's growing assertiveness in regional seas.

Motegi "strongly criticized" the growing military crackdown on civilian protesters in Myanmar, and welcomed efforts by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to respond to it, his ministry said in a statement.

Motegi and Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi, who have dis-



Japan's Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi, right, and Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi, wearing protective face masks, pose for a photograph prior to the Japan Indonesia Foreign Ministers meeting in Tokyo on Monday, March 29, 2021.

Associated Press

cussed the Myanmar situation twice by phone since the Feb. 1 military coup in

that country, agreed Monday to cooperate closely to improve the situation

there, the ministry said.

The military government's violent crackdown has escalated in recent days. At least 114 people, including several children, were killed by security forces on Saturday alone. The toll prompted a U.N. human rights expert to accuse the junta of committing "mass murder" and criticize the international community for not doing enough to stop it.

Japan has not joined the United States and some other Western nations in imposing sanctions on Myanmar, but has stepped up verbal protests.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Katsunobu Kato on Monday said the Japanese government will study

"measures that would be effective in calming down the situation and restoring democratic systems."

The two foreign ministers are to join defense ministers from the two countries for "2 plus 2" security talks in Tokyo on Tuesday.

They also shared "grave concern" about Chinese attempts to change the status quo in the East and South China seas, the ministry said.

Japan, which has a territorial dispute with China over a cluster of East China Sea islands, sees China as a security threat and is discussing the stepping up of military cooperation with Indonesia and signing of an arms and technology transfer agreement. □

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A Soviet-era legacy, Lada cars awaken passions for Cubans

By ANDREA RODRIGUEZ

Associated Press

HAVANA (AP) — Uncomfortable, wasteful, tough, rustic. All are descriptions heard about the old Russian-built Lada cars cruising the roads in Cuba, where it is common to see a driver standing next to the raised hood of one pondering what has gone wrong this time.

Yet, despite the flaws, Ladas arouse passions. The car is the island's most visible Soviet-era legacy. And in a land where transportation is scarce, Ladas are a status symbol for their owners, even if they must perform engineering miracles — sometimes at high monetary cost — to keep them going.



A Soviet-era Lada taxi cab drives along the Malecon in Havana, Cuba, Monday, March 22, 2021.
Associated Press

At the end of last year, a handful of owners founded the Lada Cuba Club and in less than four months it has about 140 members who meet for social ac-

tivities like donating blood, assisting each other when breakdowns happen or just trading quick-fix tricks and parts.

"It has always been said

that the Lada is the Cuban's car," Carlos Rodríguez, a 29-year-old craftsman who heads the club, told The Associated Press. Rodríguez recently drove

his white Lada 2106, manufactured in 1985, seven years before he was born, to a gathering of about 50 owners at a carwash in the Marianao neighborhood of Havana. They gave their cars a collective bath, talked about mechanics, joked and showed off each other's progress.

Then they headed out together honking their horns and to a park on the outskirts of the city.

Some decorate the boxy Lada, including adding hammer and sickle graphics.

Drivers also adapt new parts to keep their cars rolling, but others strive to leave them just as they were the first day off the assembly line. □

Many Brazilians disregard the pleas to stay at home

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — Authorities in Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro begged the population to stay home, but thousands of Brazilians are traveling to coastal cities and ignoring

recommendations on the first weekend of a 10-day holiday period decreed to contain the increase in COVID-19 infections in the country.

Some residents are clear-

ing out and taking advantage of the holidays, despite warnings from authorities. Brazil's two biggest cities, Rio and Sao Paulo, have imposed extensive restrictions on non-essential activities. Their state authorities brought forward holidays to create a 10-day break period, which started Friday.

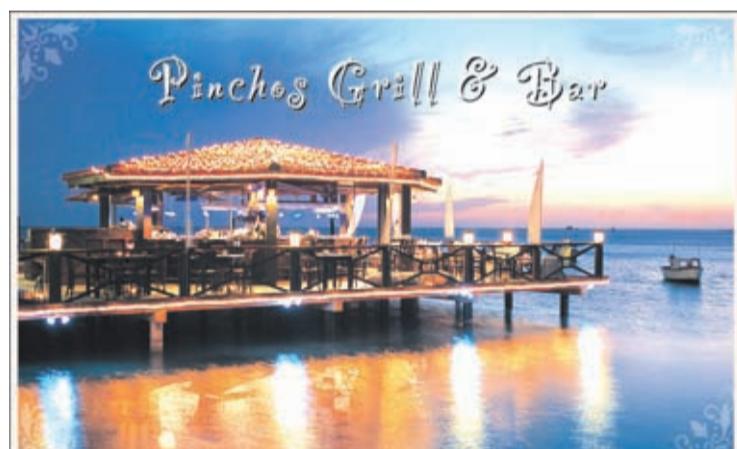
Many scenes in Brazilian cities show the difficulty that authorities are facing in enlisting the cooperation of the population to contain the spread of the virus.

In Sao Sebastiao, a city of more than 80,000 inhabitants on the Sao Paulo coast, tourists destroyed barriers installed at the access to beaches to avoid crowds, according to local reports. □

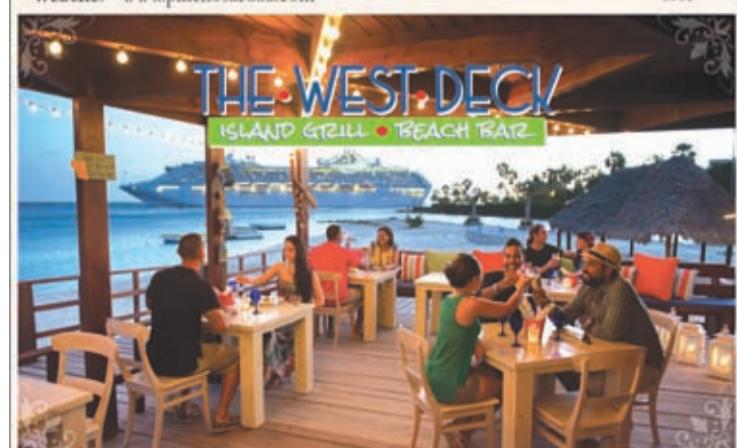


Supporters of Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro protest the start of a 10-day period of increased restrictions, which includes Holy Week, to help curb the spread of COVID-19, on Copacabana beach in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Friday, March 26, 2021.

Associated Press



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Papillon restaurant: The butterfly effect of magnificent food

PALM BEACH — Do you remember the film "Papillon" starring Steve McQueen? Papillon restaurant is the island's example where 'life imitates art.' The décor, especially the restrooms, was inspired by the movie. For more than a decade this restaurant has built a reputation with the fusion of classic French cuisine, Dutch and Caribbean flavors. Welcome in the world of wonders where ambiance, taste and service come together and you feel you are being welcomed in the home of the owner and her team.

"We find it really important that our guests have fun; can relax while listening to live music while their taste buds are being tickled by France, The Netherlands and the Caribbean. We offer a unique fusion of dishes and a night not to forget," says owner Tina. She points out that all Covid-protocol is in place here, they are very keen on hygiene and offer outside dining on a cozy, elegant terrace with social distancing in place and right on the high-rise strip.

Now: Early Bird & Live Music

New rules with regards to the Covid-19 situation will not prevent us from offering you a

wonderful, gastronomic night. Papillon knows how to fly high and rises to the occasion with a beautiful combo of three courses including a glass of wine for only \$ 32 per person. This Early Bird is on from 5pm to 7pm. It gets even better with live entertainment by the local star Marisela, praised for her amazing voice which she will bring to you on Mondays and Fridays. The talented tunes of Jairo's saxophone enchant you on Tuesdays and Thursdays and each Saturday Venezuelan born musician Jose Herrera will show you why his name is established on the island and in Europe.

Oysters, caviar and wild boar

You are on vacation, life is to enjoy! If you want something special, a different flavor than the usual then Papillon is the place to go. Foodies are in heaven here with classic French dishes such as Foie Gras, Frog Legs, fresh Oysters coming in on a weekly basis with KLM, Escargots, Dover Sole à la Meunière flown in from Europe and filleted at the table, Duck Breast seared on the skin, roasted and braised Lamb in Balashi beer and slow braised Wild Boar Shank. Do not leave without trying the exclusive recommendation: Caviar! All of this combined with an extensive wine list from around the world makes Papillon a must-do on your



Aruban vacation.

Tina: "Our chef is from Peru and at the moment we have the renowned guest chef Griet Vanbrabant who worked in Michelin star restaurants like El Bulli in Spain which happened to be the world's best restaurant for many years and Pujol in Mexico. So this is the time to come over and reserve your table."

Vegetarian vibes present

Impressive vegetarian/vegan dishes are set up especially for the guests by the chef and Meredith from Vegan Aruba. "We offer vegan choices that are really good and tasty. Our daily soup is always vegan too." What are you waiting for, make sure to pay a visit to this elegant yet laid-back restaurant while on Aruba. You are most welcome!

Papillon Restaurant is located at The Village across the Hilton Aruba Caribbean Resort &Casino and within walking distance of all other major hotels.□

Make your reservation today at:

info@papillonaruba.com
or call/WhatsApp + 00297 699 5400

Open Daily: 5pm – 9pm- Last seating at 7.30pm

For all menus and specials visit the website: www.papillonaruba.com.



United Airlines' Big Caribbean Expansion



As optimism grows in the travel industry, United Airlines is continuing to expand its Caribbean network, Caribbean Journal has learned. In fact, United Airlines will soon be flying more flights to the Caribbean, Mexico and Central America than it did in 2019 — before the pandemic.

"We are proud of United's deep roots and history throughout Latin America," said Patrick Quayle, United's vice president of International Network and Alliances. "In May, we will greatly expand our Latin America schedule, offering

even more options than we did in 2019. This will include numerous opportunities for travelers reuniting with friends and family and those seeking a warm-weather, beach destination."

United will be operating nonstop service in May to 13 destinations across the Caribbean from its hubs in Chicago, Denver, Houston, Los Angeles, New York/Newark and Washington, DC. That will include flights to Aruba, The Bahamas Bermuda, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, St Maarten, St Thomas and Turks and Caicos. That will include a number of Ca-

ribbean routes with more than one flight per day, including two daily flights from Newark to St Thomas and Aruba and five flights each day from Houston to Cancun, among others. Among other notable routes, United will be flying daily flights from Chicago to both Punta Cana and San Juan; daily flights from Houston to St Thomas; and at least one flight every day from Newark to Nassau, Turk and Caicos, Santo Domingo, San Juan, Santiago and St Maarten.□

Source: Caribbean Journal

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Aruba does not want a lockdown due to tourism

ORANJESTAD - Despite the sharp increase in the number of corona cases, Aruba wants to avoid a lockdown, such as on the neighboring islands of Curaçao and Bonaire, and also in the Netherlands. Above all, the island does not want to close the borders at all and new, extra measures should above all not stand in the way of the cautious recovery of tourism.

Minister Oduber expresses his joy on Facebook about increasing flights to Aruba from America. "This new increase is not convenient, just when we have a situation where tourism is improving again," said Minister Dangui Oduber, responsible for health and tourism. "The latest estimate for March also shows that we will receive more than 43,000 tourists. And for the coming, second quarter, there will be another increase in flying seats that is higher than in 2019." But Aruba, with more than 650 active cases, cannot escape taking extra measures. Because the hospital has never been so full since corona arrived on the island a year ago. Horacio Oduber Hospital rang the bell this week; there are only a few places left in intensive care. And this time not because of a shortage of respiratory equipment, but of staff. Of the 18 ic beds, the hospital has now managed to increase this number to 22. Most corona patients in the hospital are obese and almost 40% have high blood pressure. But with 43 corona patients admitted, 13 of whom are in intensive care, the hospital is not out of the danger zone for the time being.

The extra measures are therefore in addition to those that the government already took last week, such as the ban on alcohol consumption on the street and visiting each other. As of March 27, the curfew is again 2 hours longer (starts at 10 p.m.); the schools must close for



two weeks starting March 29 and camping is not allowed for the second year in a row. The latter is a popular tradition with the population during the Easter holidays.

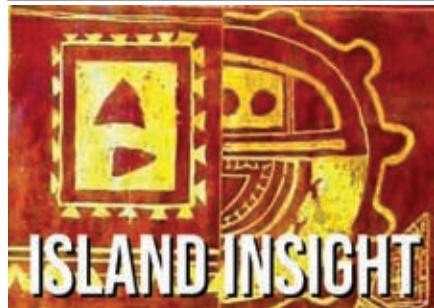
Going out for dinner relaxed

Yet the Aruban government - in contrast to Curaçao and Bonaire in particular - does not want to harm tourism with the new restrictions. That is why the catering industry remains open, only with an earlier closing time from 11 am to 9 pm. The rules for dining out are also becoming more flexible: instead of a maximum of two, four more at a table and children under 12 are not counted. So they can join you at the table. Plus, the eaters

don't have to come from the same household or be friends. Head of infectious diseases department Sharline Koolman explains why this measure has been relaxed while at the same time informing that restaurants are in the top three of the hot spots of infection on the island: "It actually concerns the bars that also have a restaurant license and where every time a flood of people is. The problem is therefore not where the four of you sit down and eat neatly at a table and then leave. That is why we have relaxed that again. The top three sources of infection also include churches and sports facilities (gyms). The latter must also be closed for two weeks.

Half of the new cases are due to the much more contagious British corona variety. People also walk around longer (3 to 5 days) with symptoms without reporting this or they do not want to tell it at all that they are infected, says Koolman. In addition, the government cannot trace the source of the infection at all for a third of the cases. Curaçao has now overtaken Aruba with the record number of active infections (above 2000). But Aruba still has the record number of corona deaths of 82. On Curaçao 28 people have died so far, on St. Maarten 27 and on Bonaire the death toll is 10. □

Source: Caribisch Netwerk



Article by Etnia Nativa

WhatsApp us 592 2702 and book your Aruban experience!

Etnia Nativa is close to high rise Hotels



Desert Island Living

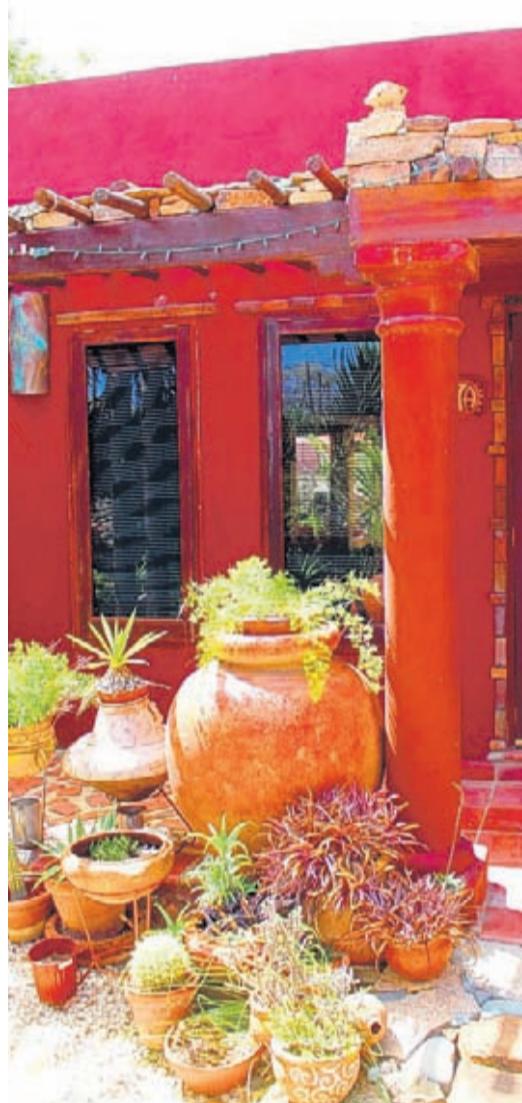
ORANJESTAD — Back to basics and back to simplicity is what brings you back to earth. By relying on those plants that do well in a desert atmosphere, one can create a peaceful and healthy garden living environment while saving on maintenance and garden caring time.

A desert garden can be incredibly attractive and offers many additional benefits such as significant cost savings results. Water is expensive when used in substantial quantities when trying to maintain a more traditional type of garden in an area that is not blessed with a lot of rain like our arid Aruba, where this precious liquid of life can be quite expensive. The trick is experimenting and choosing the right plants species and varieties accustomed to a hot and dry environment. Desert landscaping is both profitable and a wonderful proposition.

Plants like succulents perform at their best in their native climate and our desert environment offers these advantages when using these kinds of plants that thrive in drought conditions.

While it is possible to create and maintain a lush green lawn in a desert landscaping with frequent watering, it won't matter what you do to encourage growth, it will never be as tough as a bluegrass lawn in a temperate region. However some experimental varieties are being developed.

In our old but beautiful island climate is tropical one and hot all year round. Daytime temperatures are around 29/31 degrees Celsius (84/88 ° F) but the wind moderates the heat. Since the trade wind blows constantly from mainly the Northeast direction, it is advisable to keep in mind the path of the sun and use the land completely to your advantage when planning an environmental conscious self-sufficient project. Now, you must keep in mind rain water recollection, garbage disposals, food security, picking the right building material for creating fresh well lid relaxing spaces in a dwelling where without a doubt you can do without the need



of an air conditioners operating in the buildings during most of the year.

Although the so-called "rainy season" lasts from the end of October to the beginning of January, most of this rain falls in the form of short and strong showers. It may be the case that mosquitos may become annoying during mornings hours, sun down or at night. So proper screening is recommended to keep bugs outdoors. In case of extremely hot days solar can reduce cooling energy cost during extreme hot days as an alternative. In the following picture we can see a one bed bedroom with open windows looking east to the rising sun. The wind blows through the whole room making it a place to relax and enjoying leisure on clear sunny but windy days.

A fresh and clean air welcomes you to the autochthonous, the fusion of the colonial and native cultures that characterizes Etnia Nativa desert dwelling, wood, woven tapestries and native art work. □



To get to know a little more regarding Aruba's and its cultural origins we highly recommend you to book your participation in our cultural encounter session.

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Mail us at etnianativa03@gmail.com, our facilities and activities take place close to high rise hotels.

Episode XCVIII -98

If you need to find tax help, try DIY first

By LIZ WESTON of NerdWallet

let

Getting help from the IRS this tax season is going to be a challenge.

The IRS has finally opened the 23.4 million pieces of mail that piled up after the pandemic shuttered its processing centers last spring. But the agency still has a backlog of paperwork from last year even as it ingests this year's returns, issues a third round of relief payments and gears up to send monthly child tax credit payments to millions of families.

The tax deadline has been moved from April 15 to May 17, giving people more time to file. Getting help is another matter. Callers face long wait times with no guarantee they'll reach a human being. Meanwhile, many tax help sites are closed or working at reduced capacity because of COVID-19 restrictions.

Here are some common questions and answers that could save you some time or point you to resources that will help.

WHERE'S MY STIMULUS PAYMENTS?

The IRS dispatched two rounds of economic impact payments last year.

If you didn't receive your payments or received less than you should have, you can claim the "recovery rebate credit" on your 2020 tax return that's due May 17.

The third relief payment, created by the \$1.9 trillion stimulus package that President Joe Biden signed into law March 11, started arriving in bank accounts shortly afterward. The rules are somewhat different for this relief check, which is worth up to \$1,400 per person. For the first time, all dependents of eligible taxpayers can get the payment, including college students. Also, there is a steeper phaseout: Single filers with adjusted gross incomes up to \$75,000 can receive the full amount, but the payment decreases above that level and zeroes out at \$80,000. The phaseout range is \$112,500 to \$120,000 for heads of household, and \$150,000 to \$160,000 for married couples filing jointly. Payments will be based on adjusted gross income on 2020 returns, if those have been filed, and on 2019 returns otherwise.

None of the payments are taxable, and you typically

won't have to repay the money if you get too much. Taxpayers can check the IRS' Get My Payment tool to track the status of their relief payments.

In addition to the relief payments, monthly payments of up to \$300 per child are expected to begin in July and continue through December. This enhanced child tax credit begins to phase out at adjusted gross incomes of \$75,000 for singles, \$112,500 for heads of household and \$150,000 for joint returns.

HOW DO I GET A REFUND OF THE TAXES I PAID ON UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS?

The latest stimulus package also exempts \$10,200 of last year's unemployment benefits from taxation for people with adjusted gross incomes under \$150,000. The IRS has promised to automatically refund the appropriate amounts to those who already filed their 2020 returns before the stimulus deal was signed.

WHERE CAN I GET FREE TAX HELP?

Most taxpayers can file their federal taxes online for free, using software that guides them through their returns and checks for errors. The IRS' Free File pro-



This undated file photo provided by NerdWallet shows Liz Weston, a columnist for personal finance website NerdWallet.com.

NerdWallet via Associated Press

gram is available for taxpayers with adjusted gross incomes of up to \$72,000. Unfortunately, some online tax preparers promise free filing but then divert users into paid options, so it's best to begin the process on the IRS' Free File page at www.irs.gov/freefile.

If you need more help, you may be able to get free assistance through the IRS' Volunteer Income Tax Assistance and Tax Counseling for the Elderly programs, although many of the pro-

grams are operating differently this year. Some sites are temporarily closed and others are not operating at full capacity, but the programs also have added low- and no-contact options.

For example, the largest such program, AARP Foundation's Tax-Aide, has added online and drop-off services, says Lynnette Lee-Villanueva, program vice president. In-person sessions are still available but only by appointment. □

Global banks warn of possible losses from hedge fund default

BERLIN (AP) — Swiss bank Credit Suisse said Monday it may have suffered a "highly significant" loss

from a default by a U.S.-based hedge fund on margin calls that it and other banks made last week,

while Japan's Nomura said it could face a loss of \$2 billion due to an event with a U.S. client.

Credit Suisse didn't identify the "significant" hedge fund or the other banks affected, or give other details of what happened. News reports identified the hedge fund as New York-based Archegos Capital Management.

"Following the failure of the fund to meet these margin commitments, Credit Suisse and a number of other banks are in the process of exiting these positions," the company said.

The Financial Times reported that Archegos had

large exposures to ViacomCBS and several Chinese technology stocks and was hit hard after shares of the U.S. media group fell last week.

A margin call is triggered when investors borrow using their stock portfolio as collateral and have to make up the balance required by banks when the share prices fall and the collateral is worth less.

Credit Suisse said that "while at this time it is premature to quantify the exact size of the loss resulting from this exit, it could be highly significant and material to our first-quarter results, notwithstanding the

positive trends announced in our trading statement earlier this month." Credit Suisse said that it plans to issue an update "in due course."

Nomura said that on Friday "an event occurred" that could subject one of its U.S. subsidiaries to a loss of \$2 billion based on market prices on Friday. It didn't identify the client. The bank said "there will be no issues related to the operations or financial soundness" of Nomura or its U.S. subsidiary.

The Archegos website was not immediately available. □



This Oct. 21, 2015 file photo shows the logo of the Swiss bank Credit Suisse, in Zurich, Switzerland.

Associated Press

U.S. report: Bald eagle populations soar in lower 48 states

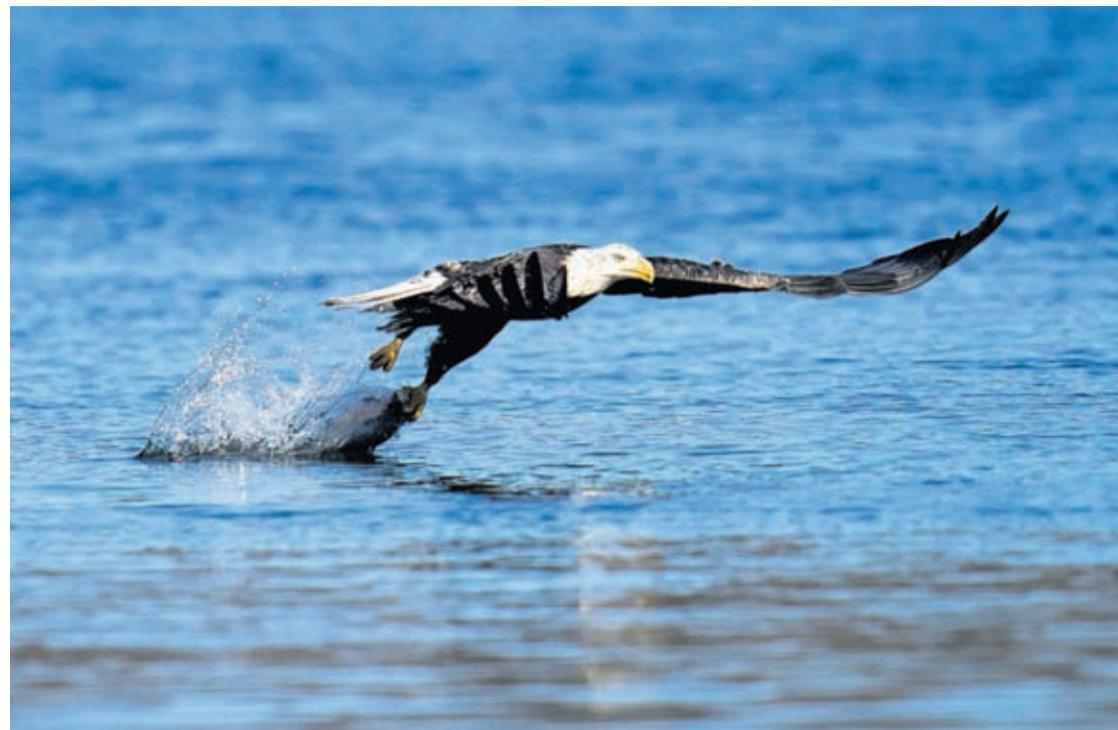
By MATTHEW DALY

WASHINGTON (AP) — The number of American bald eagles has quadrupled since 2009, with more than 300,000 birds soaring over the lower 48 states, government scientists said in a report Wednesday.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service said bald eagles, the national symbol that once teetered on the brink of extinction, have flourished in recent years, growing to more than 71,400 nesting pairs and an estimated 316,700 individual birds.

Interior Secretary Deb Haaland, in her first public appearance since being sworn in last week, hailed the eagle's recovery and noted that the majestic, white-headed bird has always been considered sacred to Native American tribes and the United States generally.

"The strong return of this treasured bird reminds us of our nation's shared resilience and the importance of being responsible stewards of our lands and waters that bind us together," said Haaland, the first Native American Cabinet sec-



In this Nov. 20, 2020, file photo, a bald eagle grabs a fish from the Susquehanna River near the Conowingo Dam, in Havre De Grace, Md.

Associated Press

retary.

Bald eagles reached an all-time low of 417 known nesting pairs in 1963 in the lower 48 states. But after decades of protection, including banning the pesticide DDT and placement of the eagle on the endangered species list in more than 40 states, the bald eagle population has con-

tinued to grow. The bald eagle was removed from the list of threatened or endangered species in 2007. "It is clear that the bald eagle population continues to thrive," Haaland said, calling the bird's recovery a "success story (that) is a testament to the enduring importance of the work of the Interior Department sci-

entists and conservationists. This work could not have been done without teams of people collecting and analyzing decades' worth of science ... accurately estimating the bald eagle population here in the United States."

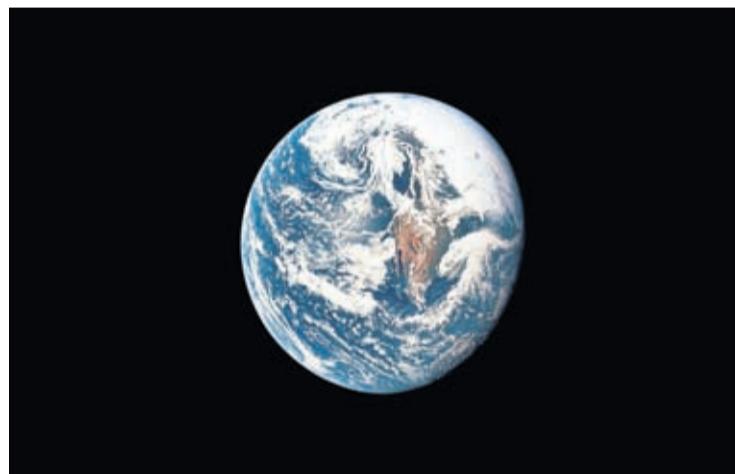
The celebration of the bald eagle "is also a moment to reflect on the importance

of the Endangered Species Act, a vital tool in the efforts to protect America's wildlife," Haaland said, calling the landmark 1973 law crucial to preventing the extinction of species such as the bald eagle or American bison.

Reiterating a pledge by President Joe Biden, Haaland said her department will review actions by the Trump administration "to undermine key provisions" of the endangered species law. She did not offer specifics, but environmental groups and Democratic lawmakers criticized the Trump administration for a range of actions, including reducing critical habitat for the northern spotted owl and lifting protections for gray wolves.

"We will be taking a closer look at all of those revisions and considering what steps to take to ensure that all of us — states, Indian tribes, private landowners and federal agencies — have the tools we need to conserve America's natural heritage and strengthen our economy," Haaland said. □

NASA gives all clear: Earth safe from asteroid for 100 years



This May 18, 1969 photo made available by NASA shows Earth from 36,000 nautical miles away as photographed from the Apollo 10 spacecraft during its trans-lunar journey toward the moon.

Associated Press

By MARCIA DUNN
AP Aerospace

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — Whew, now here's some good cosmic news: NASA has given Earth the all clear for the next century from a particularly menacing asteroid.

The space agency announced this week that new telescope observations have ruled out any chance of Apophis smacking Earth in 2068. That's the same 1,100-foot (340-meter) space rock that was supposed to

come frighteningly close in 2029 and again in 2036. NASA ruled out any chance of a strike during those two close approaches a while ago. But a potential 2068 collision still loomed.

First detected in 2004, Apophis is now officially off NASA's asteroid "risk list." "A 2068 impact is not in the realm of possibility anymore, and our calculations don't show any impact risk for at least the next 100 years," Davide Farnocchia of NASA's Center for Near-Earth Object Studies, said in a statement Friday.

Scientists were able to refine Apophis' orbit around the sun thanks to radar observations earlier this month, when the asteroid passed within 10.6 million miles (17 million kilometers). Apophis will come within 20,000 miles (32,000 kilometers) on April 13, 2029, en-

abling astronomers to get a good look.

"When I started working with asteroids after college, Apophis was the

poster child for hazardous asteroids," Farnocchia said. "There's a certain sense of satisfaction to see it removed from the risk list." □

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

			7	5	3		4
4				2		1	5
							6
2				8			6
6	5					8	1
1					6		3
	2						
8		9		4			5
	7		2	1	5		

Difficulty Level ★★

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Taxi D.T.S.	587 2300
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'A reset button' — Black theater leaders push for change



42nd Annual Kennedy Center Honors in Washington on Dec. 8, 2019, from left, Billy Porter arrives at the 77th annual Golden Globe Awards in Beverly Hills, Calif. on Jan. 5, 2020, and Vanessa Williams attends the Roundabout Theatre Company's 2019 Gala, "Quite the Character: An Evening Celebrating John Lithgow" in New York on Feb. 25, 2019.

Associated Press

By **MARK KENNEDY**
AP Entertainment Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — What's better than a powerful voice from the Black theater community singing about change? How about 13 such voices?

Vanessa Williams, Billy Porter and Audra McDonald and other founding members of Black Theatre United have recorded the song and video "Stand for Change," with all proceeds donated to social justice efforts. The friends recorded their song parts separately due to the pandemic in partnership with the Republic Records Action Committee.

It's the latest step by Black-led groups trying to make the Great White Way look more like America.

"I think that we are at a point now where people are listening and people are willing to make changes," says Williams. "It's almost like a reset button now."

Black Theatre United was formed in response to the wave of national unrest over racial injustice that followed the police killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis in 2020. It has hosted town halls on activism, bolstered census participation and developed mentorship programs for aspiring young Black theater artists. The group also includes

Phylicia Rashad, Kenny Leon, Darius de Haas, Norm Lewis, Brian Stokes Mitchell, Lillias White, Allyson Tucker, Michael McElroy, NaTasha Yvette Williams, LaChanze, Tamara Tunie, Anna Deavere Smith, Wendell Pierce and Capathia Jenkins.

Williams says the group wants to push for diversity in every aspect of theater, from what is programmed to staffing at theaters, who is hired, marketing and bringing Black dollars into the theater. "There are conversations that are happening and there are systems that are being put in place for change on every level," she says. "This is a different time and we're proud to be a part of making the change."

According to the annual study, "The Visibility Report: Racial Representation on NYC Stages," nearly 80% of Broadway and off-Broadway shows' writers were white and 85.5% of directors during the 2017-18 season, the latest time frame analyzed.

On stages, over 61% of all roles in New York City went to white actors, a rate double the population of white people in New York City. Data on designers is even more unbalanced: In the 2018-2019 theatrical season, 91% of Broadway design slots were filled with

white designers.

"Diversity is a fact, which we live with. Inclusion is a choice and it's now time to make those choices across all levels of theater, not only commercially, but also regionally, too," says Williams. Other groups created in the past few years to spur change include We See You White American Theatre, Black Theatre Coalition, Broadway Advocacy Coalition, Design Action, Musicians United for Social Equity and Broadway for Racial Justice.

They're asking theater companies about the racial makeup of their trustees, their hiring practices and their pipeline of talent. They're creating fellowships and mentorship programs and demanding equitable representation.

"Instead of longing for old Broadway to come back, let's be excited for the Broadway that's coming to us if we take this time and do the work that we all deep down want to do and want to be done," says Celia Rose Gooding, who stars in "Jagged Little Pill."

The group Broadway & Beyond has launched virtual networking workshops for stage managers of color, while Broadway Records and the Black Theatre Coalition have teamed up to

create an album of new works by emerging Black musical theater writers, elevating their voices. Musicians United for Social Equity is concentrating on ensuring there's a pipeline for musicians of color who want to work in the theater. It hosts a national online directory of Black orchestrators, arrangers and musicians, provides music assistant fellowships and create opportunities for mentorship, education and outreach connections.

The directory can help chip away at the standard practice of just hiring friends and would help, say, a touring company in Cincinnati find a trombone player. "So the excuse of 'We don't know where they are' can no longer be used," says Zane Mark, a composer, orchestrator, arranger and programmer who co-founded the group.

"It's not as simple as just hire a whole bunch of Black guys. That's not what we're trying to do. But we would like to go to the opening night of a show, look over into the pit and not see only white people," he adds. His organization is mulling the idea of endorsing shows by giving its seal of approval. Trying to reflect change, several theater companies have shaken up their staffs. The Public Theater, Sec-

ond Stage Theater, Roundabout Theatre Company and Lincoln Center Theater have all appointed or elevated theater artists of color. Roundabout has launched The Refocus Project to spotlight marginalized Black plays.

The recent push for racial equity sees to have had an impact on shows scheduled to open when Broadway does. Black playwrights and actors will be showcased in a revival of Alice Childress' "Trouble in Mind"; "MJ," a musical about Michael Jackson by Lynn Nottage; "Skeleton Crew" by Dominique Morisseau; "Thoughts of a Colored Man" by Keenan Scott II; and Melvin Van Peebles' "Ain't Supposed to Die a Natural Death."

Broadway has had seasons where diversity gains have been recorded and then lost. The 2013-14 season was rich with roles for African Americans, including "A Raisin in the Sun" starring Denzel Washington, Audra McDonald channeling Billie Holiday in "Lady Day at Emerson's Bar & Grill" and the dance show "After Midnight." That season, Black actors represented 21% of all roles. But the next season, the number fell to 9%. Dede Ayite, who has earned two 2021 Tony Award costume design nominations and is a member of Design Action, says change has to happen before Broadway doors reopen. Her group is pushing for the day when half of all designers are non-white.

"You can't expect things to open and feel like we're all healed," she says. "We have to do the legwork now so that when we start to come back then we can really enforce and not return to the way things were." □

9	6	1	7	5	3	2	4	8
7	4	8	6	2	9	1	3	5
5	3	2	1	8	4	7	6	9
2	9	4	8	3	1	5	7	6
6	5	3	4	7	2	9	8	1
1	8	7	5	9	6	4	2	3
4	2	5	9	6	8	3	1	7
8	1	9	3	4	7	6	5	2
3	7	6	2	1	5	8	9	4

Difficulty Level ★★

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3/30

Billy Horschel wins Match Play when he least expects it

By DOUG FERGUSON

AP Golf Writer

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — Billy Horschel is back among the top 20 in the world for the first time since the summer of 2015, and all it took was low expectations and the longest week of his career.

Horschel demands a lot from himself, and that starts with preparation. That's why it was so unusual for him to spend a week on the water at the Florida beaches of Melbourne with his family, not touching a club for seven days before arriving at the Dell Technologies Match Play.

All he wanted was to see what kind of shape his game was in so he could figure out what needed work going into the Masters. Five days, seven matches and 122 holes later, he had his first World Golf Championship.

"You just never know when you're going to win," he said. "You just never know when it's going to be your time."

And in this case, he couldn't have imagined how he would win Sunday at Austin Country Club.

Horschel made only one birdie in the championship match against Scottie Scheffler, and that was on the fifth hole when he chipped in from below the green. Even with nothing but pars and one bogey the rest of the way, he never lost a hole.

On two par 5s, Horschel was in the fairway and Scheffler had to take a penalty drop, and both times they halved the hole with a par (No. 6) and a bogey (No. 12). On another par 5 with a chance to close out the



Billy Horschel holds his trophy after winning the Dell Technologies Match Play Championship golf tournament Sunday, March 28, 2021, in Austin, Texas.

Associated Press

match, Horschel again was in the fairway and Scheffler was in the trees with barely a shot out to the fairway. Horschel had to get up and down from a bunker behind the green to halve the 16th.

It wasn't pretty. It wasn't easy. But he won on the 17th hole when Scheffler couldn't make a 10-foot birdie to send the match down the final hole.

"It wasn't pretty at all," Horschel said. "It was just one of those days where you knew you just had to keep grinding out, trying to give yourself the best opportunity to make easy pars and hopefully that was going to get the job done."

And there was some luck

involved, because there usually is in this most fickle format.

Max Homa had a putt to send him home on Friday. Horschel had to make a 20-foot birdie putt on the 17th hole against Tommy Fleetwood in the quarterfinals, and then won that match when Fleetwood hit out-of-bounds on the first extra hole. Even then, Horschel had to make a 5-foot putt. And it helped that at the end of the five-day tournament, neither Victor Perez in the semifinals nor Scheffler in the championship match had their best stuff. By the end of the week, it seems no one did.

Perez lost three holes on the back nine with bogeys.

Scheffler, who had made 15 birdies in 31 hole to beat Ian Poulter and Jon Rahm on Saturday, and who made a 10-foot birdie on the 17th hole that led to a tough win over Matt Kuchar in the semifinals, didn't make anything in the last match. His only birdie was conceded from 35 feet because Horschel had hit into a hazard.

"I couldn't really get that spark that I needed," Scheffler said. "And I gave myself some opportunities, just wasn't able to make the putts."

Horschel can only wonder if lowering his expectations only helped. He sounded more worn out from his time at the beach than over

the five days on the golf course. But he needed it. Striving for perfection can take a toll.

"I needed a mental reboot," he said, "and that's what I got."

Now he has bigger goals, starting with his next opportunity at match play. He has never played in the Ryder Cup, and while he remains outside the top qualifying spots, he still has four majors and a World Golf Championship on his schedule.

Horschel played in the Walker Cup against Rory McIlroy in 2007 at Royal County Down, where he got under McIlroy's skin with his passion for team play and beat him in singles and a foursomes match before McIlroy returned the favor by beating Horschel in Sunday singles.

But match play hasn't always worked out for him as a pro. In four previous trips to this event, Horschel never got to the weekend.

The one loss that stings was against McIlroy — him again — at Harding Park in 2015, when McIlroy birdied the last two holes and beat him on the 20th hole with a par.

Timing wasn't on his side the one shot he had at the Ryder Cup. The captain's picks were made the week before Horschel won the last two FedEx Cup playoff events, and beat McIlroy at East Lake to capture the cup.

"Maybe this year is the year," he said. "We're still six months away from the Ryder Cup, so there's still a lot of golf left to be played and we'll just have to see how the rest of the year plays out." □

Nationwide joins growing list of NWSL sponsors

By ANNE M. PETERSON

Nationwide has become a sponsor of the National Women's Soccer League, the latest in a string of league partnerships that have been growing since the Women's World Cup in 2019.

The multiyear deal with Nationwide will help expand the league's community initiatives,

including an annual service and grant program. As part of the deal, Nationwide and the league will recognize an NWSL team with a postseason award for community service.

The league, in its ninth season, currently counts Nike and Budweiser as national sponsors. Secret Deodorant will sponsor the upcom-

ing preseason Challenge Cup tournament. CBS and Twitch are the league's broadcast partners. The Challenge Cup opens April 9 with a rematch of the tournament's final last summer between the Chicago Red Stars and the Houston Dash.

The league's regular season opens May 15. The NWSL this sea-

son is welcoming Racing Louisville, bringing the league to 10 teams, with two more expansion clubs set to join in 2022. The Utah Royals were disbanded following the 2020 season with a new team in Kansas City taking its place.

Nationwide is an insurance and financial services company based in Columbus, Ohio. □

NCAA tourney hits halfway point, still the field vs. Gonzaga

By JIM LITKE
AP Sports Writer

The Elite Eight marks the halfway point of the NCAA Tournament, but don't blink. It has the shelf life of chicken nuggets.

By the time your head hits the pillow tomorrow night, we'll be down to a Final Four and find out whether the selection committee is any better at seeding teams than the cooks at your local McDonalds.

Three of the four teams handed No. 1s — Gonzaga, Baylor and Michigan — are still in the field, which is average. But so are three Pac-12 Conference teams — No. 6 USC, No. 11 UCLA and No. 12 Oregon State — which definitely is not. Needless to say, the road would have been a lot smoother for the Pac-12 entries if their league got anywhere near the respect the Big Ten and Big 12 carried inside the room where it (seeding) happens.

USC and UCLA were the last two teams to claim their seats Sunday. The Trojans handily beat fellow Pac-12 member and seventh-seeded Oregon, while the Bruins needed overtime — after a last-second hiccup — to put away No. 2 Alabama 88-78.

"I'll never live that one down," UCLA coach Mick



Gonzaga forward Drew Timme (2) and Jalen Suggs (1) greet Joel Ayayi (11) to the bench in the second half of a Sweet 16 game against Creighton in the NCAA men's college basketball tournament at Hinkle Fieldhouse in Indianapolis, Sunday, March 28, 2021.

Associated Press

Cronin said afterward. "The kids bailed me out."

In the two other games, Gonzaga looked unbeatable one more time while steamrolling No. 5 Creighton 83-65, while Michigan had surprisingly little trouble shaking No. 4 Florida State 76-58, once again displaying the kind of balance and depth to upset the Zags' (29-0) quest for a title and the first perfect season since the 1975-76 Indiana Hoosiers.

"They just play so fast, so efficient with everything they

do," said Marcus Zegarowski, who led Creighton with 19 points. "There are no lapses. You just can't take, not even a play, you can't take a second off or they're going to make you pay."

UCLA essentially took the last four seconds off, and the Tide made them pay. Leading by three with Alabama in-bounding the ball, Cronin chose not to have his players commit a quick foul and give up two free throws. Two passes later, Alex Reese canned a long 3-pointer — the tourna-

ment's first buzzer-beater — and you could have fried an egg on the top of Cronin's plate.

Fortunately, his players saw it otherwise. That nonchalance has paid dividends for these Bruins, who had to beat Michigan State in the First Four just to get into the big-boy bracket. UCLA is the first play-in team to get this far since VCU in 2011, the year the brackets were expanded to 68 teams.

"We knew we had nothing to worry about," UCLA guard Jaime Jaquez Jr.

said. "This is March. It happens all the time."

The Bruins opened the extra period with a 3-pointer by David Singleton, then a steal and layup by Tyger Campbell and never looked back.

Speaking of hindsight, no matter how the Pac-12 trio fares from here on out, the selection committee still has some explaining to do. Nine Big Ten teams began the tournament — including four teams among the top eight overall seeds — and only Michigan is left. The Big 12 got seven entries and all but Baylor are home now watching on TV.

Monday's games pit Baylor against No. 3 Arkansas, which banished this year's real Cinderella, 15th-seeded Oral Roberts, in the Sweet 16. In the day's other game, Oregon State faces No. 2 Houston.

For all that, the real question hanging over the tournament since it began is whether the Bulldogs can be beat. Their three tournament victories have come by 43, 16 and 18 points. They boast three finalists for the national player of the year award in Corey Kispert, Drew Timme and freshman Jalen Suggs, and a fourth player, Joel Ayayi, who would be a star almost anywhere else. □

Barty goes distance, tops Azarenka to reach Miami quarters



Ashleigh Barty of Australia, returns to Victoria Azarenka of Belarus, during the Miami Open tennis tournament, Monday, March 29, 2021, in Miami Gardens, Fla.

Associated Press

By TIM REYNOLDS
AP Sports Writer

MIAMI (AP) — Ash Barty seems to enjoy getting

pushed to a deciding set. The top seed from Australia moved into the quarterfinals of the Miami Open

on Monday, holding off 14th-seeded Victoria Azarenka of Belarus 6-1, 1-6, 6-2 in a matchup of past Miami champions — plus one where the current world No. 1 topped the former world No. 1.

It was Barty's second win of a three-setter so far in this tournament, and she improved to 17-3 in her last 20 matches that have gone the distance. Barty will next face No. 7 seed Aryna Sabalenka or No. 19 seed Marketa Vondrousova, who were scheduled for a fourth-round match later Monday.

It was Barty's ninth consecutive win at the Miami Open — going back to her

2019 title march as the No. 12 seed.

Barty controlled the first set by breaking in the fourth game to take control and win 6-1. For Azarenka, a three-time Miami champion, turnabout was fair play in the second.

Azarenka broke for a 2-0 second-set lead when Barty pushed a forehand into the net in the ensuing game, prompting the three-time Miami champion to pump a fist and get a smattering of applause from the largely empty grandstand — with coronavirus protocols limiting the crowds at the tournament to a sliver of their usual size.

Azarenka quickly got down

0-40 in her next service game, then escaped and rolled through the rest of the set.

But the third was all Barty, who never got in trouble and finally finished Azarenka off after 1 hour, 52 minutes.

Also Monday, 12th-seeded Milos Raonic of Canada topped 20th-seeded Ugo Humbert of France 6-4, 7-5 in a third-round matchup, and Marin Cilic of Croatia — the 2014 U.S. Open champion — defeated Italy's Lorenzo Musetti 6-3, 6-4 to move into the men's fourth round.

Cilic's best showing in Miami was a trip to the quarterfinals in 2013. □